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LOWEST PACKAGE ANNOUNCED

Performing hajj under pvt agents will cost Tk 14,000 more this year

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SOUTH MEETS NORTH

Kim Jong-un hosts a historic dinner for South Korean envoys

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Help solve the Rohingya crisis

PM tells Vietnamese president; he voices support for long-term solution; 3 MoUs signed



AGENCIES, Dhaka

Bangladesh yesterday sought Vietnam's support for a peaceful solution to the Rohingya crisis as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina held official talks with visiting Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang. "We have discussed the Rohingya crisis that threatens peace and stability of our region. I sought Vietnam's support for a

peaceful solution to the problem," she said. The two countries issued a joint press statement after the meeting at the Prime Minister's Office in the morning, reports BSS. Hasina said President Quang expressed his support for a viable and long-term solution to the problem. The two countries agreed on holding the second Foreign Office Consultation and the

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Once a supervisor at state-run Platinum Jute Mills in Khulna, Sohrab Hossain now lives on handouts. He retired in March 2015 after 36 years of service. The labour law says retirement benefits must be paid within 30 days, but the mill authorities have not cleared his dues even in three years. The photo was taken near Chitrali Bazar in Khalishpur on November 25 last year.

PHOTO: MARTIN SWAPAN PANDEY

JUTE DAY TODAY

Reality vs labour law

An investigation in Khulna industrial area shades light on the forgotten lives of workers

In the last few years, a lot has changed in the jute sector. Production is rising and along with it the export of jute and jute goods. State-run BJMC's loss is showing a downward trend. But the fate of over 5,700 retired jute employees is still up in the air, as their five-year wait for their retirement benefits continues.



MARCH 6, 1971

Tension builds up as March 7 rally nears

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With people of East Pakistan roaring for the declaration of independence, the suspense of what was to come on the March 7 rally grew. And with it, grew the angst and violence of the Pakistan government.

Conditions were fast slipping out of the government's control in East Pakistan with the movement going forward.

On the 5th day of the movement, March 6, 1971, peaceful strike was still being observed in Dhaka. But around 11:00am, 321 prisoners broke out of the

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5 YEARS INTO TAQI MURDER Rab still sitting on charge sheet

SANAD SAHA, Narayanganj

For Taqi's parents, the last five years have been a long, agonising wait for justice. And they have no clue as to when that wait would be over.

Taqi's father Rafiur Rabbi, who had been to countless demonstrations and public events to talk about his grievances, said people in his hometown now called him *Taqi'r Baba*. It has even drowned his identity as a cultural activist.

"Trial starts after charges are pressed in a case. But that has not happened in five years. Charges have not been pressed. Sometimes I call Rab officers, who are investigating the case. They tell me that the investigation is going on. That's all," he said.

Seventeen-year-old Tanwir Muhammad Taqi went missing after he had left home for Sudhijon Pathagar, a library in Narayanganj city, around 4:00pm on March 6, 2013.

His A-level results were out the next day and he emerged as the highest scorer in the world in physics.

Taqi's body was found floating in the Shitalakkhya on the morning of March 8.

The day Taqi went missing, Rabbi filed a general dairy with Narayanganj Kotwali Police Station. He filed a murder case with the same police station on the day the body was found.

He submitted a complaint to the Narayanganj superintendent of police 10 days later accusing seven people, including Shamim Osman and his son Ayon Osman and 8-10 unnamed others, of murdering Taqi.

Sitting at her home on Shayesta Khan Road in Narayanganj, Taqi's mother Rawnak Rehana remembered

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"We are not asking for any favour or more than what we are entitled to. If only they [the authorities] knew how we suffer!"

MOAZZEM HOSSAIN
A PARALYSED WORKER, WHO RETIRED FROM PLATINUM IN 2016.



MARTIN SWAPAN PANDEY

Every time he extends his hands to seek alms, Sohrab Hossain, 63, looks embarrassed. Begging has never been his livelihood; it is now.

Sohrab, who spent 36 years toiling away at the state-run Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills in Khalishpur in Khulna, should not have needed to take up begging, a social problem that the government wants to eradicate from the country.

When he retired in March 2015 as a

line sardar, a supervisor of about 40 workers, his retirement benefits totalled Tk 7,50,000 – Tk 5,24,000 in gratuity and Tk 2,26,000 in provident fund (PF).

Under the labour law, all his dues were to be cleared within 30 days. It was not.

About two and a half years ago, a stroke left him paraplegic, bound to a wheelchair which he paddles with his only working right hand around Chitrali Bazar as he goes about begging.

"Who knew life would come to this? ... I wish I could work again, but

"It is our failure that we could not pay them.... Sometimes, I feel that I lost the moral authority to sit in this chair,"

MUHAMMAD SALEHUDDIN
BJMC SECRETARY



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MUHITH SEEMS TO BE ANTI-JUTE:
MIRZA AZAM – PAGE B1



Farmers doing their part well

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Before the growth of the textile industry, jute was once the main cash crop of Bangladesh as it was the only exportable product in the country.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visits Prof. Zafar Iqbal at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka yesterday. Prof. Zafar Iqbal, a faculty member of Computer Science and Engineering department at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, was attacked with a knife on the campus on Saturday.

PHOTO: BSS

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